Panchayati Raj institutions and SHGs

*11. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are evolving a scheme, with co-operation of World Bank for federating self-help groups (SHGs) into Panchayati Raj institutions to organize women from poor and disadvantaged rural households to make them vibrant and self-sufficient;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have developed any mechanism to periodically monitor working of Panchayati Raj outfits?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) At present, there is no such proposal under the consideration of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The first task before the Ministry was to evolve a national consensus in respect of the Roadmap for Panchayati Raj through mutual consultation between the Centre and the States. Ministry of Panchayati Raj convened Seven Round Tables of State Panchayati Raj Ministers with the Union Minister of Panchayati Raj between July and December 2004. The deliberations centered on the 18 identified dimensions of Panchayati Raj ranging from the effective Devolution of the Functions, Finances and Functionaries to District Planning, Training and Capacity Building and IT-enabled e-governance. At the conclusion of each Round Table, nearly 150 action points comprised in the Compendium were unanimously adopted by all Panchayati Raj Ministers and referred to Chief Ministers for their approval. This has become a National Roadmap for effective Panchayati Raj. Further, the Minister (Panchayati Raj) has visited 23 States and Union Territories and signed a joint declaration with the respective Chief Ministers of States setting forth the path to full empowerment of Panchayats.

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj is continually interacting with the State Governments to ascertain the effectiveness of PRIs. A Committee of Panchayati Raj Secretaries was constituted to monitor the progress and implementation of these 150 Action Points. This Committee of Secretaries headed by the Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj would also service the Council of Panchayati Raj Ministers. The Committee of Secretaries has held nine meetings. The Council of Ministers has been convened thrice, at Kochi, Kerala in August 2005, at Bhubaneswar, Orissa in June 2006 and at Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala in August 2007, respectively. The Empowered Sub-Committee of National Development Council also reviews the progress of implementation of the provision of the Constitution during its meetings, which are held periodically. Most of these action points revolve around follow up measures on activity mapping, matching transfer of funds and functionaries, creation of Panchayat sector in the State budget, constitution and operational guidelines for the District Planning Committees within an agreed time-frame.

Improvement of delivery system

*12. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are working fast to introduce a new technology driven integrated smart card system that would improve delivery systems and bridge the gap between target and achievements for various schemes;